

Members

Sen. R. Michael Young, Chairperson
Sen. Billie Breaux
Rep. James Buck
Rep. Ed Mahern
Dan Gammon
Paul Ricketts
Rick Snyder
Vince Huber
Joe Anderson
Tom Hanify
Dr. Philip Borst
Monroe Gray
Cathy Burton
John S. Myrland
A. Scott Chinn



MARION COUNTY CONSOLIDATION STUDY COMMISSION

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Authority: P. L. 227-2005

MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date: October 19, 2005
Meeting Time: 6:00 P.M.
Meeting Place: Ben Davis High School, 1200 N. Girls School Rd., Auditorium
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana
Meeting Number: 4

Members Present: Sen. R. Michael Young, Chairperson; Sen. Billie Breaux; Rep. James Buck; Rep. Ed Mahern; Dan Gammon; Paul Ricketts; Rick Snyder; Vince Huber; Joe Anderson; Tom Hanify; Dr. Philip Borst; Monroe Gray; Cathy Burton; A. Scott Chinn.

Members Absent: John S. Myrland.

Senator Young convened the meeting at 6:05 p.m. The Commission received the following testimony:

¹ Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.in.gov/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

E. Mitchell Roob, Jr., Secretary, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA)

Mr. Roob reviewed the memorandum he prepared concerning modernizing the public assistance eligibility structure. See Exhibit 1. Mr. Roob discussed system improvements, including increasing automation, having trustees and nonprofit entities perform intake work, and updating technology.

Lisa Hays Murray, Governmental Affairs Counsel, Marion County Sheriff's Department (MCSD)

Ms. Murray distributed a handout concerning court fees, sheriff service fees, and constable service fees. See Exhibit 2. Ms. Murray said that Deputy Chief Shirley Challis of the Civil Division of the MCSD suggests a sheriff's service of process fee of \$20 (instead of the \$13 on the handout) and a \$250 writ of execution and replevin fee (instead of the \$200 on the handout). Ms. Murray said that the MCSD could collect an additional \$1.31 million in revenue if it charged for papers served that they currently do not charge for.

Senator Young announced that the Commission would now receive testimony from the public:

Darrell E. Morris, Hidden Lake Estates Homeowners Association

Mr. Morris discussed his opposition to further consolidation in Marion County and satisfaction with the current services received from the township fire department and MCSD. He said there is no basis in experience for believing that consolidation will save money and will not result in a tax increase. Indianapolis should not involve the townships in fixing its fiscal problems.

Tom Langdoc, Director of School/Community Services, Metropolitan School District (MSD) of Wayne Township

Mr. Langdoc (speaking on behalf of Dr. Terry Thompson, Superintendent of the MSD of Wayne Township) voiced support of township government as being more responsive than a consolidated government located in downtown Indianapolis. He discussed the Wayne Township Fire Department's effort with the MSD to develop an emergency preparedness response plan and the firefighters' volunteer activity in the schools.

Fred McHenry, citizen

Mr. McHenry questioned whether Indianapolis would still be in financial difficulty if the Indianapolis Works Plan (IWP) passed. He expressed concern that consolidation will cause a tax increase.

Carl E. Moldthan, Hoosier Taxpayer's Association

Mr. Moldthan said that it would cost Indianapolis \$12 million to give Kelly Days to the township firefighters. He expressed concern about the efficiency of ambulance service after consolidation.

Jack O. Hensley, Raymond Park Neighborhood Association

Mr. Hensley said that he is concerned with safety and security in his neighborhood after consolidation, because he does not know if there will be sufficient law enforcement manpower or patrols. He is satisfied with the current response time by the MCSD.

Norman Pace, Far Eastside Neighborhood Association, Warren Township Development Association

Mr. Pace said that since Indianapolis representatives did not provide adequate answers, his associations refuse to support the Indianapolis Works Plan (IWP). Mr. Pace is concerned that the city will not guarantee adequate public safety personnel assigned to the area served by his associations.

Marsha Clapper, citizen

Ms. Clapper said that the sheriff (an elected official) should be in charge of law enforcement, not a commission and that the police and sheriff's department should not be forced into consolidation. She praised the disaster preparedness efforts of Tom Marendt, Warren Township Trustee.

Pat Andrews, Marion County Alliance of Neighborhood Associations

Ms. Andrews opposes the Indianapolis Police Department (IPD)/ MCSD consolidation without a referendum. She reported that the Decatur Township Civic Council opposes the IWP because they are concerned that it will affect public safety response times.

Steve Davis, citizen

Mr. Davis said that public safety consolidation in other cities has resulted in tax increases and decreases in efficiency and responsiveness. He said that more study of the proposal is needed before it is adopted.

Rep. Mahern and Senator Young discussed whether the police consolidation issue was within the charge of the Commission under SEA 307.

Jim Mann, Wayne Township Board

Mr. Mann said that consolidation under the IWP is a complex issue requiring further study and supports a referendum. He said that the sheriff should be the only law enforcement officer who should be in charge of law enforcement.

Greg Wright, C⁴

Mr. Wright said that he represents an umbrella group of neighborhood associations. He expressed concern that the IPD/MCSD consolidation will risk public safety, but favors Sheriff Anderson's proposal. He supports a referendum on consolidation

but no tax dollars should be used for advertising. He commented favorably on the convenience and efficiency of the current small claims court system. His research indicates that consolidation does not result in savings.

Larry Jahnke, citizen

Mr. Jahnke reviewed a report prepared by the International Association of Chiefs of Police regarding consolidating police services. See Exhibit 3. The report indicates that stakeholders need to be involved in consolidation planning and although a referendum isn't essential, public support needs to be gauged.

Roger Bowser, citizen

Mr. Bowser said that he is a member of the Wayne Township board. Mr. Bowser discussed other jurisdictions that have held a referendum before consolidation and said that the Brookings Institute supports voter input. He said that time should be taken to review plans proposed as alternatives to the IWP.

William A. Boyd, citizen

Mr. Boyd said that Perry Township government is accessible, efficient, responsive, and accountable to the voters and that the Perry Township fire department has satisfactory response times. He said that Indianapolis needs to address its own fiscal problems instead of shifting costs and debt to the townships through consolidation. He said that consolidation will not improve the provision of services to the townships and suggested that Mayor Peterson work with township officials to create efficiencies.

Scott Allen, citizen

Mr. Allen said that he chose to reside in Wayne Township because he likes the township services. He believes that smaller government is more efficient, accessible, and accountable to the voters. He supports paying more money in order to keep township government.

Edward DeLaney, citizen

Mr. DeLaney explained that he originally opposed Unigov, but now supports consolidation because it represents hope and leadership. He said there are too many public officials and they are unfamiliar to most citizens. He said that residents of the suburbs benefit from the Indianapolis city center, but don't want to pay for the benefits. The IWP would give the mayor additional powers, such as coordinating fire services. He said that leadership regarding consolidation has to come from the legislature and city government because police officials and others can't be relied on to eliminate their own jobs. The mayor should be trusted to work out the details of the law enforcement consolidation within broad parameters and goals.

Paul Bateman, citizen

Mr. Batemen said that he supports consolidation based upon his research. He said that law enforcement consolidation is good public policy that would provide better coverage for the entire county and tax relief for those paying for both the MCSD and the IPD. He discussed how the consolidation transition team, which includes law enforcement professionals, is looking at beat patrols and manpower.

Eric Essley, citizen

Mr. Essley said that he supports consolidation, especially consolidation of the township fire departments and IFD. He discussed how consolidation would reduce the administrative duplication across the ten fire departments involved, and make a more efficient single department with greater purchasing power.

Phyllis Nieske, League of Women Voters of Indianapolis

Ms. Nieske discussed an independent study done by the League of Women Voters that concluded that consolidation would streamline government, save money, and eliminate some double taxation. Ms. Nieske indicated that she would provide copies of the study to the Commission.

Shirley Hauck, citizen

Ms. Hauck said that she serves on the Franklin Township board. She said the township does everything possible to save the residents money. She stated that there is no cost savings in law enforcement consolidation.

Robert Yahara, citizen

Mr. Yahara said that he is a clergyman whose congregation is located in Pike Township. Mr. Yahara spoke generally about the sheriff/police consolidation issue and the tax equity problem in Center Township.

Mike Reeves, President, Indianapolis Professional Firefighters Union Local 416

Mr. Reeves said that after consolidation, fire service will be run by the Indianapolis Fire Department and there will be fire based emergency response.

Future meeting dates; adjournment

Senator Young said that Commission staff will send out copies of Preliminary Draft 3828 which contains proposed technical corrections to SEA 307-2005. Senator Young instructed staff to distribute Preliminary Draft 3273 concerning prohibiting nepotism in township government to Commission members. He asked all Commission members to contact Anne Haley, LSA Staff Attorney no later than October 26 regarding any proposals or recommendations that they want the Commission to consider. He scheduled the next meeting for November 16 at 10:00 a.m. He said that the Commission will hear the testimony of the consultants that were hired by the Commission to review the IWP. He said that members will receive a copy of the consultants reports before the meeting. At the November 16th meeting, the Commission will consider any proposals and recommendations of the members. Sen. Young scheduled the final meeting for November 28 at 10:00 a.m.. He explained that the Commission will vote on the final report at that meeting, stating that SEA 307-2005 requires the Commission to submit the final report before December 1, 2005. The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m..